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releasable.

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7. (U) FORCE PROTECTION INFORMATION:

A. (U) IN APR97, U.S. NAVAL VESSELS RESUMED PORT VISITS TO ADEN. SINCE THIS VISIT, DEFENSE TIES BETWEEN YEMEN AND THE U.S. HAVE EXPANDED. U.S. DEFENSE OFFICIALS AND THE YEMENI GOVERNMENT HAVE PUBLICLY STATED THAT DEFENSE COOPERATION BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES WILL GROW IN THE FUTURE.

B. (U) MILITARY COOPERATION BETWEEN THE U.S. AND YEMEN HAS BEEN A CONTROVERSIAL ISSUE IN YEMEN FOR EXTREMIST ISLAMIC GROUPS. MILITARY COOPERATION PROGRAMS AND U.S. SHIP VISITS HAVE BEEN DENOUNCED BY ISLAMIC GROUPS AND POLITICAL PARTIES. IN ADDITION, VISITS BY HIGH-RANKING U.S. MILITARY OFFICIALS USUALLY GENERATE PUBLIC SPECULATION ABOUT ALLEGED U.S. PLANS TO ESTABLISH BASES IN YEMEN.

C. (U) WEAPONS ARE READILY AVAILABLE IN SEVERAL AREAS OF YEMEN, ALTHOUGH THEY ARE MORE PREVALENT IN THE NORTH THAN IN THE SOUTH. A VARIETY OF WEAPONS ARE SOLD, INCLUDING HANDGUNS, RIFLES, RPGS, MORTARS AND GRENADES.

D. (U) SINCE THE REUNIFICATION OF THE COUNTRY IN 1990, YEMEN HAS ENJOYED A VIBRANT FREE PRESS, WITH NEWSPAPERS ADVOCATING A WIDE RANGE OF POLITICAL OPINION IN THE COUNTRY. HOWEVER, MANY OF THESE PAPERS HAVE PRINTED UNTRUE OR SENSATIONALISTIC INFORMATION ABOUT U.S. INTENTIONS IN YEMEN OR ABOUT THE MISSIONS OF U.S. FORCES DEPLOYING TO YEMEN.

E. (U) THE YEMENI CIVIL WAR RESULTED IN THE LAYING OF THOUSANDS OF MINES THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY. THE RESULT HAS BEEN A STEADY STREAM OF CIVILIAN CASUALTIES FROM MINES LEFT IN RURAL AREAS. DON PERSONNEL ARE ADVISED TO STAY ON MAJOR HIGHWAY ARTERIES WHEN TRAVELING IN YEMEN.

F. (U) THE SOLICITATION OF "BAKSHEESH" OR BRIBES BY GOVERNMENT AND POLICE OFFICIALS IS A RELATIVELY COMMON OCCURRENCE IN YEMEN. DON PERSONNEL SHOULD BE AWARE THAT POLICE IN YEMEN FREQUENTLY PULL OVER CARS WITH FOREIGNERS IN THEM TO DEMAND SMALL BRIBES.

G. (U) BECAUSE OF THE NATURE OF THE SECURITY ENVIRONMENT IN YEMEN, PERSONNEL VISITING YEMEN ARE ADVISED TO RESTRICT THEIR TRAVEL TO WELL KNOWN TOURIST AREAS, AND TO USE LOCAL GUIDES OR ESCORTS WHEN TRAVELING IN THE COUNTRY.

8. (U) YEMEN/GENERAL INFORMATION:

A. (U) YEMEN IS LOCATED ON THE SOUTHERN END OF THE ARABIAN PENINSULA, BORDERING THE GULF OF ADEN/THE ARABIAN SEA AND THE RED SEA. YEMEN IS A LARGE COUNTRY, COMPRISING APPROXIMATELY 527K SQUARE KILOMETERS. THE POPULATION OF YEMEN IS APPROX 16 MILLION PERSONS. THE CAPITAL OF YEMEN IS SANAA, WHICH IS LOCATED INLAND IN THE NORTHWESTERN SECTION OF THE COUNTRY. YEMEN'S PRIMARY SEAPORT AND SECOND LARGEST CITY IS ADEN, WHICH IS LOCATED ON YEMEN'S SOUTH COAST ON THE GULF OF ADEN.

B. (U) UNTIL 1990, YEMEN WAS DIVIDED INTO TWO COUNTRIES, THE YEMEN ARAB REPUBLIC (NORTH YEMEN) AND THE PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF YEMEN (SOUTH YEMEN). NORTH YEMEN WAS A CONSERVATIVE ARAB STATE ALIGNED WITH THE WEST, WHILE SOUTH YEMEN WAS A MARXIST STATE CLOSELY ALIGNED WITH THE FORMER SOVIET BLOC. IN MAY90, THE TWO COUNTRIES UNITED TO FORM A SINGLE NATION, THE REPUBLIC OF YEMEN. IN MAY94, SECESSIONIST FORCES IN THE SOUTH BROKE OFF TO FORM AN INDEPENDENT STATE. BETWEEN MAY AND JULY94, A SHORT BUT INTENSE CIVIL WAR TOOK PLACE, WITH THE SOUTHERN SECESSIONIST

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FORCES BEING DEFEATED. THE CIVIL WAR PROVED TO BE COSTLY FOR YEMEN, LEAVING AN ESTIMATED 7,000 PERSONS KILLED AND PARTS OF THE COUNTRY (PARTICULARLY ADEN) SEVERELY DAMAGED.

C. (U) SINCE UNIFICATION, YEMEN HAS HAD AN ACTIVE DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM, WITH A NUMBER OF POLITICAL PARTIES AND FREE ELECTIONS. THE COUNTRY HAS BEEN POLITICALLY DOMINATED BY PRESIDENT ALI ABDALLAH SALIH AND HIS GENERAL PEOPLES CONGRESS (GPC) PARTY. SALIH WAS NAMED PRESIDENT AFTER UNIFICATION IN 1990, AND HAD ALSO SERVED AS NORTH YEMEN'S MILITARY RULER BETWEEN 1979-90.

D. (U) YEMEN HAS HAD A LONG DISPUTE WITH ITS PRIMARY RIVAL, SAUDI ARABIA, OVER THE BOUNDARIES DEMARKING THE BORDER BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. A LARGE PART OF THE BORDER BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES REMAINS UNDEFINED.

E. (U) IN OCT98, AN INTERNATIONAL ARBITRATION PANEL AWARDED YEMEN CONTROL OF MOST OF THE HANISH ISLANDS, A SMALL GROUP OF ISLANDS LOCATED OFF OF YEMEN'S RED SEA COAST. CONTROL OF THE ISLANDS HAD BEEN A CONTENTIOUS ISSUE BETWEEN ERITREA AND YEMEN FOR SEVERAL YEARS. BEFORE THE DISPUTE WAS BROUGHT TO ARBITRATION, THERE WERE SEVERAL MILITARY CLASHES BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES OVER THE ISLANDS. AFTER THE RULING WAS ANNOUNCED, ERITREA PROMISED TO HONOR THE ARBITRATION DECISION.

9. (U) MISCELLANEOUS:

A. (U) YEMEN IS A CONSERVATIVE ISLAMIC COUNTRY, AND CLOTHING THAT COULD OFFEND CONSERVATIVE YEMENIS SHOULD BE AVOIDED. PERSONNEL VISITING YEMEN ARE ADVISED NOT TO CALL ATTENTION TO THEMSELVES IN EITHER DRESS OR MANNER.

B. (U) DOD PERSONNEL VISITING YEMEN ARE PROHIBITED FROM BRINGING ANY TYPE OF WEAPON INTO THE COUNTRY VIA COMMERCIAL CARRIER. PROHIBITED ITEMS INCLUDE FIREARMS, MACE, PEPPER SPRAY OR KNIVES. PERSONNEL ATTEMPTING TO BRING THESE ITEMS INTO THE YEMEN MAY BE SUBJECT TO ARREST AND/OR DEPORTATION BY YEMENI AUTHORITIES.

C. (U) DOD PERSONNEL CONDUCTING OFFICIAL BUSINESS IN YEMEN ARE ADVISED TO COORDINATE THEIR ACTIVITIES WITH U.S. EMBASSY OFFICIALS. IN ORDER TO AVOID POTENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS PROBLEMS WITH THE GOY, THE U.S. EMBASSY SHOULD BE ADVISED OF ANY LIAISON OR OPERATIONAL ACTIVITY CONDUCTED BY DOD PERSONS OR COMPONENTS IN COUNTRY.

D. (U) THE LOCALLY GROWN NARCOTIC "QAT" IS WIDELY USED AND SOLD THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY. QAT, THE LEAF FROM THE QAT BUSH, IS GROWN WIDELY THROUGHOUT YEMEN, AND CAN BE PURCHASED IN MARKETS AND ALONG THE ROADSIDES FROM VENDORS. QAT CHEWS ARE A SOCIAL OCCASION IN YEMEN AND VISITORS ARE OFTEN ENCOURAGED TO PARTAKE. VISITING DON PERSONNEL ARE ADVISED THAT QAT IS CONSIDERED A "MILD" NARCOTIC AND IS A PROHIBITED (CLASS 4) CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE. POSSESSION OR USE OF QAT BY MILITARY PERSONNEL CAN RESULT IN DISCIPLINARY ACTION.

10. (U) POINTS OF CONTACT:

A. U.S. NAVAL CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIVE SERVICE, MIDDLE EAST FIELD OFFICE, BAHRAIN:

COM: (973) 724-271/DSN: (318) 439-4271

B. U.S. EMBASSY SANAA:

DHAHR HIMYAR ZONE, SHERATON HOTEL DISTRICT
(MAIN SWITCHBOARD): (967) 1238-842

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11. (U) NCIS ADMINISTRATIVE DATA:

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U.S. NAVAL CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIVE SERVICE
REPORT OF INVESTIGATION (ONLY) 22SEP00
THREAT ASSESSMENT/YEMEN (II) CCN: 22SEP00-0022-6292-5GNA/C
COMMAND/COMUSNAVCENT, BAHRAIN/57007
MADE AT/MEBJ/MANAMA, BAHRAIN/[REDACTED] INTELLIGENCE ANALYST
PARTICIPATING STAFF: [REDACTED] SPECIAL AGENT
DECL/X1,X5,X6//

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